



cessation
covers
by
steve halle

cessation covers

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for Monica, for Conrad, for Kurt

Funtime Press
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one day be two
anesthetize another
Heimlich me, too
have you?

thistles off
Darfur wreck
ordinance of
supernova fits

syruped, impeached
as i watch YouTube,
blasé trend as offends
a sole Memorare

without many words,
hot soul, fly scratch
ill-eye bled, love myself
less than flu

bold we, down in
destitution, creeping
a black-masked voyeur
doubly-guilty, masturbating

off white is off-
white on
the swatches, which were
novelties, how about now?

she's the one she likes.
all are pretty: psalms and banshees
like to scream along
she likes to shoot his gun

blown loose, left breath
if you wouldn't mind
another armpit for stink
another word for shame

broken-hearted brokers'
bones, the meat is gone
from our horsekill,
stuck in a clichéd maze, dessert, sir?

i'm on night chills
and Aftershock,
cherry-flavored NyQuil
and NASDAQ

crook on the inside means suicide
crops on the downside, pesticide
boy on the cribside, infanticide
favor eyes over eyesight in homicide

she asked me to untie her,
chase away the lice,
the worthy few isn't me
heaven sees

someone i overheard
twixt love & infantry
my memory severed
Oedipus sublunar, displaced

the fungus-mold, the mucus
from airborne allergens,
feels like orgasm
when i sneeze

i travail thru
atuned to end
up imbued w/
your infections

if so, relieve me
to know yr heaving
cartons of lemonade
& so relapsing

bitchy makes me probiotic,
bitchy makes me suicidal,
tell me sell what sails
tofu about you, whirl awhile

heat gone out
of me, heat gone
out of me, heat
gone out of me.

my shit is milk-
white, do stare
don't test me
my shit-pet

think i shd get off?
he first pics, her water
to put out, to blow
hoarse isn't me

“moderate rock”
confederate shoals,
queen of briars,
what is wrong w/ an image unfair?

time in gray space
a continental floe
or six-course picnic
in knee-deep snow

a blanket acne'd
w/ cigarette burns,
what am i w/o...
my sins?

moist steeple
doesn't treat eyes
to tulips, two
pieces of woodcross

a chain for yr locket
the photo drips
from yr mouthed wish
me light oversees

my greatest pension:
a shock of impatiens.
rat beneath a Blue Line train
diseases Chicago underground

port / rate of a sister city
act one of roilalty
diffident torturers treat
willowskin splayed aflame.

broke Bogart and broken
bonesaw, thinned out
source, the sun
capsizes Los Angeles

and if you skip the sun
it will make you sleepy,
if you count measured breaths,
you can snore among bodies

these mink coats
paid off well
now i'm sworn
off kill

underneath a ridgetop,
ass sprung, i leave
& the animals are trapped
up-&-come, my pets

not like hens
can pretend,
my sun is blonde
a blight

icarus explains viruses frame
wireless foaming startup
living w/o Google
willful brakeman darts—feel it

teflon people
now smile on
urethra or,
everybody get

out of a gourd
into a pie
out of pie
into the streets

world's largest roundabout
roll around, about and over.
again the sun has given up
her late day play, the rain reigns.

hairdo bad, pokes
no one's eye, get threatened
or leavened when angels lie,
play dead for the lyre & cry

i'll take a savage,
why, you sang
tea out,
too dry

truth shrouded in intelligence,
i can't smother
you like secrets,
fucking jealousy

itchy face, it
is a gadfly
mold my attraction:
fat on aged steak

i got my own pet meat
fleshbones and dollars:
your death is my art
my birth is your fame.

we can have more:
a foursome is wholesome
bruises on yr knees,
boxspring full of fruit

plenty demand a failed
cowhand to face
a strange tableau: bum
engaged in dangers

she spies keys like icees
when time is weak, second
hand's been cocked
inside your dart-shamed locks

she gave in to “we”
planted a house,
built a tree,
still, needy

widget belies bees,
a windy taboo, a yarn
pleased by redundancy
Wednesday suits you

wild horse unglued
a treatise on shoes,
hay above a barn of fault
this trope is my silt

i don't stare
what? you think
a thousand
deers fall by me

i'll go out of my way to protect
her sense of smell,
shield ears with hands to prove
her: a scent, fear a flash bulb

this won't make you
happy: you reek
of cheap perfume
you reek up every room.

seamy shell blooms agape
tissue slays a forest
creeper, less unlearned
stovetop burn, awakens imp

mows down yr subliminal ruse
no, i can't clown, bright badge
says "sane," what? i can't complain
i've been socked aside by the Sockeye's clock

i'm merry
crepe and buried
twice effused, eternally pleased
somnambulate first

faking it & tuning out:
the excitement of re-creating
numbed enthusiasms. simpleton
death, a rocker who sweats nausea;

i simply love & burn out.

Apologia

Suffice it to say, Kurt Cobain would have disliked me, haply despised me, at the point in my life, early high school, during which he was the most important person in it outside my parents who were giving me food and shelter. Ironic, isn't it? I was perhaps the ultimate timid conformist jock wanna-be, and the fuck-you anti-establishment balls of Nirvana and Cobain was some kind of glamorous I've not seen fore or since. News of Cobain's suicide became the kind of moment for me the Kennedy assassination was for my parents. I still remember where I was (lifting weights) when I heard the DJ on Q101 alt-rock radio tell the news...and I still don't know 13 years later whether or not I can make sense of his death or its impact.

Without Kurt Cobain and Nirvana, I would not be a poet. I remember sitting in Biology class my freshman year in high school copying out the lyrics to "Lounge Act" and "Drain You" by rote. Some my earliest stabs at poetry used the vocal melodic line of songs I liked with my own words substituted over the top—a cover song, as it were.

Now, with the dawn of internet lyric web sites, I've discovered my early hearing of Nirvana lyrics was far less than accurate. A recent re-obsession with Nirvana, spurred by my repurchase of *Nevermind* (someone lifted my original copy) and my finally getting around to buying the *With the Lights Out* box set, caused this to come out when writing: "one bay, bee, two / another sz / i'm lucky / to pet you." The rest of these cover poems followed, layering version on top of version until only echoes and mishearings of the original lyrics remained. It's an homage of sorts; the same kind one might find in the local bar, listening to a group called the Very Apes reinterpret songs that mattered to them way back when.

Thanks to Adam Fieled, Monica Halle and all my mentors and teachers over the years.

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